



CENTRE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
414 HOLMES STREET, SUITE 4
BELLEFONTE, PA 16823
814-355-6817
WWW.CENTRECOUNTYPA.GOV/CONSERVATION

Spring 2016

Volume 29, No. 1

Conservation Conversation

Centre County Conservation District 2015 Annual Report

Inside this issue:

Farm/City Dinner	2
New Display	2
E&S Report	3
Calendar & Poster Contest	3
Dirt & Gravel Report	4
Watershed & Education	5
AG Report	6-7

The Centre County Conservation District celebrated 61 years of service to Centre County residents in 2015. The Centre County Conservation District was formed at the request of farmers and others in the county who were interested in conservation of soil and water resources, and land use planning. The District was declared a Conservation District by the Centre County Board of Commissioner in October 1954. The District was initially organized to provide for the conservation of soil and water resources, assist in watershed protection and flood prevention, preserve woodland and wildlife, protect public lands, and to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people within the community. The District is a subdivision of state government and is administered by a volunteer based Board of Directors. The District board is currently composed of four farmer directors, two urban-public directors, one county commissioner, and four associate directors. In 2015, there were eight full-time employees. Some of the programs that the District staff administer include: The Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program; National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES); Chapter 105 Stream Encroachment; Dirt Gravel & Low Volume Roads; Chesapeake Bay Program; Nutrient Management; Ag Conservation technical assistance; as well as sponsor the County Envirothon. Monthly board meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month in Room 146 of the Willowbank Building, Bellefonte, at 7:30 p.m., and are open to the public.



Photo by Mike Philippe



Conservation Districts Help Farmers Write Required Farm Plans

Conservation Districts across the state have been holding local public workshops in addition to visiting with individual farmers to help develop the written farm plans required by State law. Anyone who has livestock (even just a few) or applies manure to their land needs a written Manure Management Plan. Anyone who disturbs 5,000 square feet (1/10 of an acre) or more of land requires an agricultural Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control Plan.

The Centre County Conservation District held two successful public workshops in March 2015, in Patton and Howard Townships. Over 85 attendees obtained workbooks and learned how to write their own farm plans. After completion of the plan, the farmer must keep the plan on-site in the event DEP does an on-site inspection and requests to view the plan.

The Conservation District has contracted Plan Writers on staff, specifically devoted to helping farmers write the plans needed for their operation. To date, the Contract Plan Writers have completed: 15 Manure Management Plans, 6 Agricultural Erosion & Sediment Control Plans, and 30 Combination Plans (Manure Management and Ag Erosion & Sediment Control). These 51 plans encompass 5,889 acres of cropland, 1,499 acres of pasture land and 3,505 Animal Equivalent Units (1 Animal Equivalent Unit = 1,000 pounds of live animal weight). Farmers sign up on a first-come first-served basis. The Conservation District utilizes a grant to pay the Plan Writers. The farmer has to pay \$50 towards the cost of the plan.



Mission Statement

The Centre County Conservation District is a committed, professional agency functioning as the primary local source of assistance to all individuals and organizations who benefit from the county's natural resources that we collectively strive to sustain and improve.

Farm/City Dinner



Secretary of Agriculture
Russell Reading

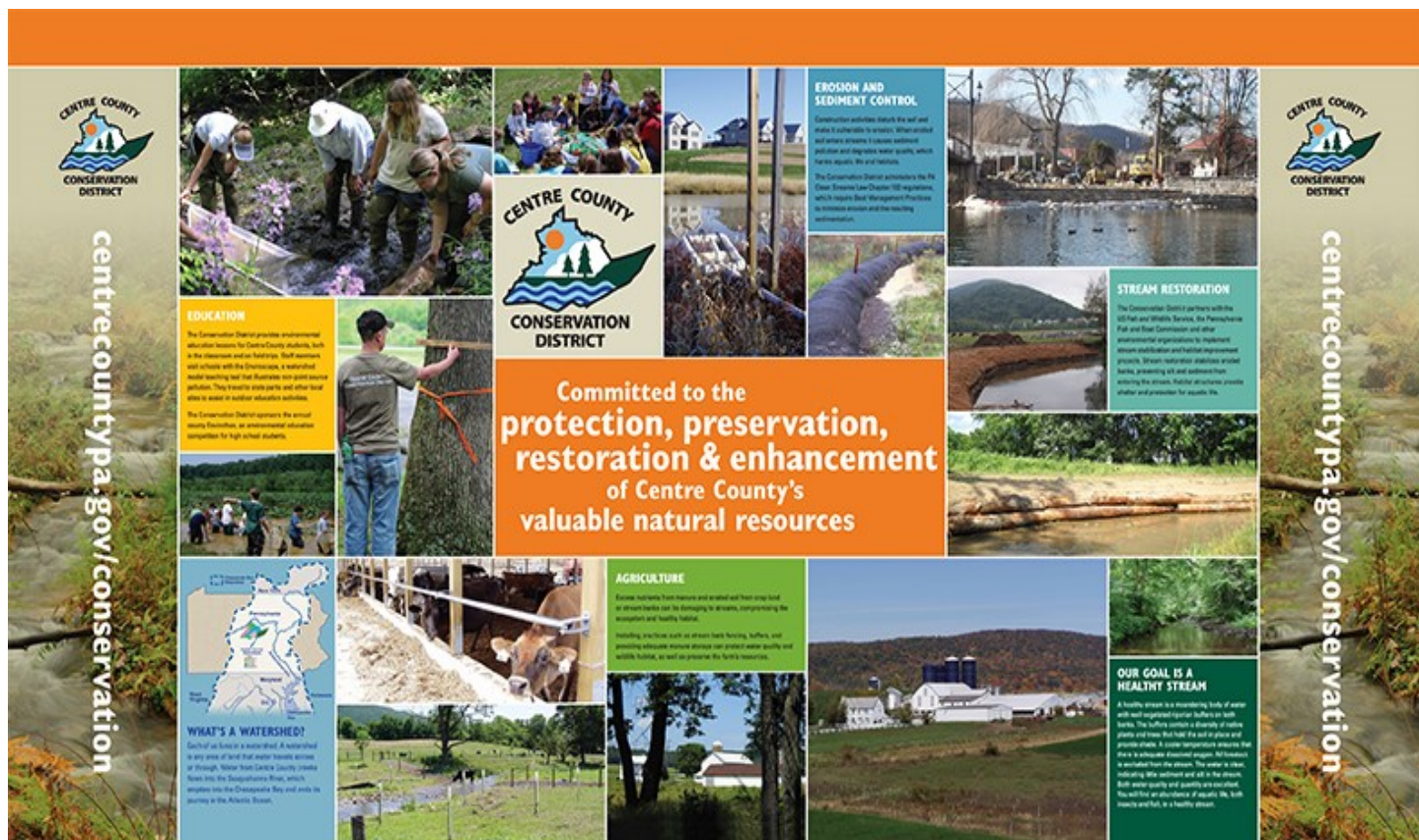
The Farm/City Dinner was held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at the New Hope Lutheran Church in Spring Mills. The dinner was sponsored by the Bellefonte FFA, the Centre County Conservation District, the Centre County Farm Bureau, the Kiwanis Club of State College and Penn State Extension of Centre County. Alissa Woomer, 2015 Centre County Grange Fair Queen, served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Centre County Dairy Prince and Princess, Justin Kurtz and Sara Lucas hosted a Milk and Cheese reception.

Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding gave the keynote address, stressing the importance of agriculture in the state. He noted the rich agricultural history of Centre County and the need to preserve our local industry.

Ann Donovan, Centre County Watershed Specialist, presented two Watershed Stewardship Awards to neighbors Aquilla Stoltzfus and Glenn Tice for stream restoration work completed on their properties. John Wataha, the Centre County Conservation District's Nutrient Management Technician, presented the Outstanding Conservation Farmer Award to Joanne Fisher. Joanne manages a beef cattle operation on her family farm located on route 550 in Halfmoon Township.

New Display

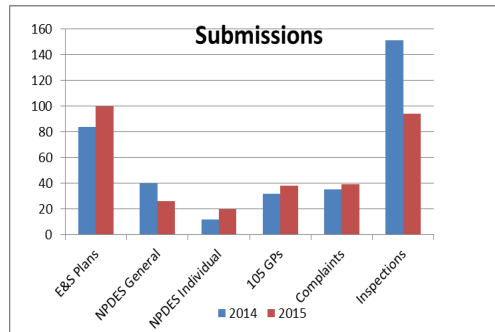
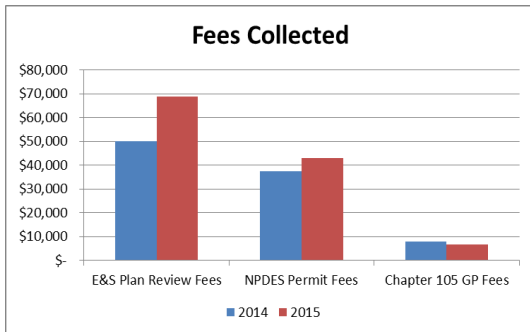
The District worked with Curt Woodcock of Graphics and Design to create a new display to be used for outreach and education purposes. The display features photographs of our four main programs--- Erosion and Sediment Control, Agriculture, Education and Watershed Management.



Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program

The Conservation District continues to administer the Chapter 102, Soil Erosion Control; NPDES permitting for stormwater discharges from construction activities; and Chapter 105, Dam Safety and Waterway Management Programs through delegation agreements with the PA Department of Environmental Protection. There were no major program changes in 2015, but DEP has revised several of the forms. The NPDES application form was revised in October 2015. Also, a new form was introduced to allow a contractor or operator to be removed from an NPDES permit.

The number of E&S plans and 105 general permits has increased slightly from last year, but the number of NPDES permits has decreased from 2014. Accordingly, E&S plan review fees and NPDES fees have increased, but Chapter 105 permit fees have decreased slightly from 2014.



2015 Conservation Poster Contest Winners

The Centre County Conservation District sponsored the 2015 annual conservation poster contest. The theme was “*Local Heroes – Your Hardworking Pollinators*”.

Winners in the Kindergarten through 1st grade division were:

- 1st place – Audrey Zheng;
- 2nd place – Nicolas Staub
- 3rd place – Autumn Shoemaker.

All students are first graders of Mrs. Shoffner - Corl Street Elementary

2nd through 3rd grade division, there were no entries received.

In the 4th through 6th grade division, the winners were:

- 1st place – Cecelia McGovern;
- 2nd place – Breyanna Williams;
- 3rd place – Cody Merrill.

All students are fourth graders of Mrs. Mason – Marion-Walker Elementary.

First place posters were sent to PACD (“Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts”) at the end of June for the statewide competition.



2016 Poster Contest

Your class/group/child is invited to participate in the annual conservation poster contest. This is your chance to help every student become active in today's pursuit for a sustainable environment – while being creative and having fun. Please visit

www.centrecountypa.gov/conservation for more information. The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) Education and Youth Committee has chosen the following theme: WE ALL NEED TREES.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

- 13-Board Meeting
- 22-Earth Day
- 23-Watershed Clean up Day
- 29-Arbor Day
- 29 & 30-Tree Seedling Distribution Grange Fairgrounds

May

- 11-Board Meeting
- 11-Centre County Envirothon
- 13-PACD Bus Tour
- 24-25- State Envirothon
- 30-Memorial Day – Office Closed

June

- 8-Board Meeting
- 14-Flag Day

July

- 4-Independence Day – Office Closed
- 13-Board Meeting
- 24-29-NCF North American Envirothon

August

- 3-Farm Bureau Tour
- 13-Board Meeting
- 16-18-Ag Progress Days – Rock Springs
- 19-27-Centre County Grange and Encampment Fair



Centre County Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program Summary

Last summer the Centre County Conservation District received 14 applications from 8 Municipalities that have attended *Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance for Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads* training workshops, making them eligible to apply for funding through this program. After a site visit to each, 10 were selected by Centre County Conservation District's Quality Assurance Board (QAB, consisting of representation from the PA Fish & Boat Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Conservation District) and recommended for funding by the Centre County Conservation District Board. The Board approved the QAB recommended sites—and a total of over \$190,000 on the ground improvements was signed into contract. Many participants also provided “in-kind” (their own) funding to complete projects.

Four Low Volume Road (LVR) sites and 6 Dirt and Gravel Roads (D&GR) were funded.

Following is a summary of these projects:

LVR Projects

Davidson Road, Boggs Township: Stabilized approximately 240' of Bald Eagle Creek along the road, to both protect the road from undermining and to create new fish habitat.

Lower Gyp Road, Benner Township: Improved stormwater drainage and replace 2 pipes. About 725' of project length.

Upper Gyp Road, Benner Township: Stormwater improvement with 2 pipe replacements, headwalls, outlet stabilization and vegetation management along 260' of project.

Summer Mountain Road, Penn Township: Replaced a stream crossing (deteriorated culvert pipe) in an unnamed tributary to Elk Creek. DEP Chapter 105 encroachment permit was needed and obtained by Penn Township for the project.



D&GR Projects



Orviston Mountain Road, Curtin Township: Placed 1500' of DSA (driving surface aggregate) and stabilized some nearby streambank, as well as replaced a cross pipe.

Haagen Road, Curtin Township: Replaced 3 cross pipes, installed 2 new cross pipes; installed about 1500' of DSA.

Sayers Hill Road, Curtin Township: Cross pipes replaced and installed about 1600' of DSA.

East Mountain Road, Worth Township: New cross pipes and gravel base to prep for future DSA placement, project length about 1500'.

Vonada Gap Road, Gregg Township: Installed a french mattress drain to improve drainage of “soft spot” on road and placed DSA over it and about 1000' of road length.

Boal Gap Road, Potter Township: Installed DSA on 1400' of roadway and vegetation management; continuation of project completed in 2014.

The Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program wishes to promote a better public road system with a reduced environmental impact—with a focus on utilizing recognized “Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance (ESM) Practices”. Funding is limited to roads open to public use and municipalities. Other road owners that wish to participate must have personnel that have recently (within 5 years) attended training in *Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance for Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads* to design and oversee their proposed project.

Often, an effort to better manage drainage (both from the road surface and keeping offsite runoff from draining onto or across) is key to proper road maintenance and will help to minimize negative impacts to our waterways- resulting in a longer lasting road stability and nearby streams being less impacted!

Contact the Centre County Conservation District for more information regarding the Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program and check out the Center for Dirt and Gravel Road studies website at: dirtandgravel.psu.edu



2015 Watershed Management

In 2015 the Centre County Conservation District helped local environmental organizations with projects that promoted their goals and objectives. In addition to providing this support we carried out watershed improvement projects of our own.

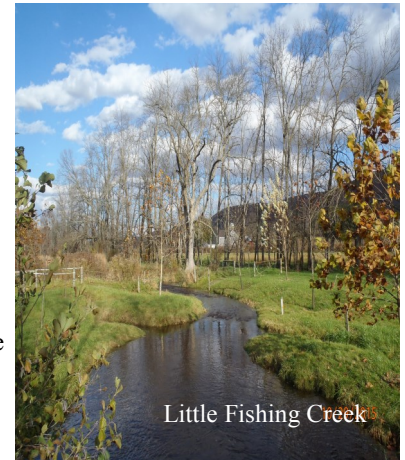
There are three organizations that conduct active stream monitoring in Centre County. The Centre County Chapter of the Senior Environment Corps of ClearWater Conservancy collect water samples in streams throughout Centre County, the Spring Creek Water Resource Monitoring Project gathers data from Spring Creek and its tributaries and the Penns Valley Conservation Association carries out thermal monitoring in Penns Valley.

Information about these groups may be found on the web at www.ccpasec.org (CCPASEC) and www.springcreekwatershed.org/water-resources-monitoring-project-wrmp.html (Spring Creek WRMP) and www.pvca.net (PVCA).

The active environmental groups in Centre County include the Bald Eagle Watershed Association (www.baldeaglewater.com), the Penns Valley Conservation Association (www.pvca.net), the Spring Creek Watershed Association (www.springcreekwatershed.org), the Spring Creek Watershed Commission (www.scwatershed.com), ClearWater Conservancy (www.clearwaterconservancy.org), the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited (www.springcreektu.org) and the West Branch of the Susquehanna River Coalition (www.wbsrc.org).

CCCD coordinated two Day of Caring sites on stream restoration projects in 2015 with the Bald Eagle Area School District and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Little Fishing Creek Habitat Project was funded by a Growing Greener grant to CCCD and executed by USFWS on two properties in Hublersburg. We installed three crossings and 17 in-stream structures. We built 4,000 feet of stream bank fencing and planted a buffer of trees and shrubs in the riparian zone.



The Commonwealth Financing Authority provided funds to the District for stream restoration work in Wallace Run, Little Marsh Creek and an unnamed tributary to Laurel Run. CCCD coordinated the project and design and construction was undertaken by USFWS.

This past year the District partnered with Penn State University and the Centre County Chapter of the PA Senior Environment Corps to provide a monitoring opportunity for PSU students. PSU installed instream equipment that enabled them to download real time water quality data on Halfmoon Creek and Buffalo Run.

In 2015, we began to execute our Chesapeake Bay Watershed Forestry Program. With funds awarded to CCCD by the US Forest Service we supplemented the buffer work of PVCA, ClearWater Conservancy, USFWS, and the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited, and planted buffers on CCCD sites in the Bald Eagle Watershed and several farms in the county. This project will be completed in June 2016

2015 Education Report

In 2015 the District offered watershed education to fifth and sixth grade students in the State College and the Bellefonte Area School Districts. Watershed Specialist Ann Donovan visited the schools with the Enviroscope, a hands-on watershed model, to teach about non-point source pollution. She participated in field days at Bald Eagle State Park, teaching pond study and watershed awareness. In April of 2015 Ann joined other professionals to bring over 500 students from Clearfield and Centre Counties to the third annual Clean Water Days event at Black Moshannon State Park. She coordinated two Day of Caring sites in the Bald Eagle Watershed with Bald Eagle Area School District students. She assisted the Penns Valley Conservation Association by teaching stream study at the Muddy Paws Marsh in Spring Mills.

In addition to her activities with the county elementary school age students, Ann was a guest lecturer at several Penn State University classes and she participated in other student environmental events at the University.

The District sponsored the county Envirothon on May 13 at Bald Eagle State Park and staff members participated in the Pennsylvania and North American Envirothons later in the year.

District Staff attended environmental education workshops focusing on Climate Change, Marcellus Shale, Energy Conservation, Stormwater and Leadership Development. We helped to organize a Sustainability Tour for attendees at the Western Pa Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation annual conference.

We provided environmental outreach activities at the Grange Fair and during Ag Progress Days. Ann has been involved with the PSU sponsored Natural Resources Leadership Institute and the Spring Creek Watershed Association Atlas Project.

Watershed Enviroscope



Nutrient Management--- ACT 38, PA Nutrient Management Program

In 2015, Centre County Conservation District staff received 4 Nutrient Management plans for review. All 4 plans were approved by the District Board of Directors. District staff also conducted 12 Nutrient Management Status Reviews. With the exception of manure testing and record keeping, all operations reviewed appeared to be in compliance with ACT 38 regulations.



Record Keeping, Manure Sampling under ACT 38

ACT 38 requires records to be kept and maintained on the operation for at least 3 years. Records shall include:

Annual Manure Production-annual amount of manure produced for each manure group listed in the plan.

Manure Test Results-annual manure tests for each manure group listed in the plan. If an outdoor (receives rainwater) manure storage is emptied twice per year, Spring & Fall, there would be 2 manure groups represented in the plan. Each manure group, Spring & Fall, would need to be sampled every year. One sample cannot represent both groups.

Soil Test Results- a soil test is required once every three years for each crop management unit.

Land Application of Nutrients- this would include field ID, number of acres, date of application, and application rate for each crop management unit.

Crop Yields- annually, approximate yield levels for each crop management unit.

Uncollected Manure- annually, number of animals, number of days, and average number of hours per day on each pasture unit.

Manure Export Sheets- for operations that export manure, the exporter is responsible for the completion of the manure export sheet, providing a copy to the importer and retaining a copy at the exporting site.

Agricultural Best Management Practices Implementation Projects

The Centre County Conservation District has been partnering with The Penns Valley Conservation Association to address resource concerns on farms located in the Penns Valley Watershed. In 2015 work was completed installing agricultural best management practices on a Dairy operation in Penn Township and a Beef operation in Potter Township.



Fall 2012--- Before BMPs

Beef operation in Potter Township

In the summer of 2013 two stream crossings were constructed on a small tributary to Sinking Creek. After the crossings were constructed streambank fence was installed to exclude livestock from the stream and to help lead livestock through the stream crossings.

In the fall of 2013 assorted trees were planted along the stream. In the summer of 2015 a water system was installed to provide water to 4 separate paddocks. Funding for the project was provided by a Chesapeake Bay Special Projects Grant, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant, Watershed Restoration & Protection Program Grant and by the landowner.

**Fall 2015-
Two years
after in-
stallation
of stream
crossing,
stream-
bank fence
ing and
planting of
larger
stock**



Watering Trough on reinforced stone

Dairy operation in Penn Township

In 2014 & 2015 work was completed on a Stream Access Ramp, Roofed Heavy Use Area, Manure Stacking Facility and a Milk house Wastewater Treatment System. In 2016 streambank fence will be installed and a Riparian Forested Buffer planted. Funding for the project was made possible through a Watershed Restoration and Protection grant, a Growing Greener Grant and the Environmental Quality Incentive Program administered by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



Spring 2015---Construction of Roofed Heavy Use Area and Manure Stacking Facility was completed. Runoff from the ACA has been eliminated. Manure is collected and stored.



Spring 2014---Before BMPs. Runoff from the Animal Concentration Area (ACA) and Milk house Wastewater directly impacts Elk Creek. Manure is not collected.



Milk house Wastewater being irrigated onto a designated filter area. It no longer impacts Elk Creek.

The Centre County Conservation District has been partnering with ClearWater Conservancy to address resource concerns on farms located in the Halfmoon Creek Watershed. In 2015 work was completed installing agricultural best management practices on a beef operation located in Halfmoon Township. Animal Concentration Areas (ACAs) are located on opposite sides of Halfmoon Creek. Runoff from ACAs directly impacts Halfmoon Creek. Manure is not collected.



Animal Concentration Areas (ACAs) located on opposite sides of Halfmoon Creek. Runoff from ACAs directly impacts Halfmoon Creek. Manure is not collected.



Fall 2015- Installing trusses on Manure Stacking Facility.



December 2015-- Roofed Heavy Use Area / Manure Stacking Facility is complete. Runoff from the ACA has been eliminated. Manure is collected and stored.

DISTRICT STAFF

Robert E. Sweitzer, District Manager
Lu Ann Bruno, Fiscal Technician
John Wataha, Agriculture Conservation/
Nutrient Management Technician
Ann Donovan, Watershed Specialist/
Education Coordinator
Daina Beckstrand, CBP/NM Technician
Jim Coslo Jr., Resource Conservation
Supervisor
Mike Philippe, Resource Conservation
Coordinator II
Barbara Ivicic, Department Clerk I

USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

(570) 726-3196 or (814) 355-2447
Scott D. Heckman,
Supervisory District Conservationist
Bryan Conklin, Engineering Technician
Amanda Coleman, Program Assistant
Zach Larson, Soil Conservationist

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Robert Shannon, Chair
Allen Ishler, Vice-Chair
Steven G. Dershem, Commissioner
Tom Boldin
Lori Hartle
James Walizer
Kaleb Wolfe

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Al Stewart
Donn Fetteroff
Martin Melville
John Smith

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Michael Pipe
Mark Higgins
Steven Dershem

CENTRE CO. RECYCLING HOT- LINE

(814) 238-6649

DEP EMERGENCY HOTLINE

1-800-541-2050

CENTRE CO. COMMISSIONERS

(814) 355-6700

CENTRE CO. PLANNING

(814) 355-6791



If you wish to receive our newsletter electronically, please call our office or email:

labruno@centrecountypa.gov



Printed on Recycled Paper

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." -- Rachel Carson

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
State College, PA
Permit No. 41